

New Efforts Announced In Delaware Challenge To End Veteran Homelessness

New Castle, DE – Today in New Castle, Governor Markell joined other officials and partners for a meeting of the state working group on the Delaware Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness where they announced several new efforts in the statewide effort to end veteran homelessness. These initiatives build on progress so far that has resulted in housing for 140 homeless veterans since January.

New Initiatives to end Veterans homelessness in Delaware:

100-day Statewide Challenge: The state is launching a statewide 100-day challenge to permanently house 96 homeless Veterans, starting October 23 and ending with the annual Point in Time study in late January 2016. The Point in Time study is the process by which Veteran homelessness is measured nationally each year. The goal is to build momentum and focus statewide energy in the final months of the effort to end Veteran homelessness in Delaware.

Veterans Count Outreach Event (November 10-12, 2015): A key part of ending Veteran homelessness is demonstrating that all homeless Veterans have been identified, including those not actively seeking assistance. Veterans Count Delaware is a state-wide outreach effort that will take place during a 3-day period, including November 11, Veterans Day. Volunteers are needed to help with this initiative.

Landlord Recruitment: Landlords interested in renting to Veterans, especially landlords who are willing to be flexible on credit, criminal background, and similar requirements to help Veterans who are turning their lives around, are needed. Concerted landlord outreach efforts, including new Public

Service Announcements (PSAs) with a call for landlords to participate, and awards for organizations and landlords permanently housing the most homeless Veterans.

Last year, HUD, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National League of Cities called on mayors across the country to make a commitment to end Veteran homelessness in their cities in 2015. On any given night, 100 Veterans in Delaware are homeless.

After announcing his intent to end homelessness among Veterans in Delaware within a year in his [State of the State Address](#), in May 2015, Governor Markell [unveiled the State's plan](#) to achieve this goal and signed on to the [national Challenge](#).

The plan called for actions including: identifying Veterans who are currently homeless or at a high risk of homelessness; improving connections and coordination between Veteran-specific and mainstream resources; and long-term changes to ensure that Veterans who may face homelessness in the future are connected to the resources they need quickly and effectively. The Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) also created 20 rental assistance vouchers dedicated to Veterans through the State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP), which provides integrated community housing with supportive services.

A state working group brings together key state and federal partners and representatives from local committees on a monthly basis to steer and monitor progress on the statewide effort. All three counties in Delaware, the cities of Wilmington, Newark, Dover, Seaford, Georgetown, Bridgeville, Greenwood, and Blades have also signed on. Local groups are working in all three counties on direct outreach and community mobilization. On any given night, 100 Veterans in Delaware are homeless. Together, 140 Veterans have been permanently housed

as of September 2015.

Governor Jack Markell stated, "I am proud of Delaware's progress towards ending Veteran homelessness. We committed to the challenge, developed a plan, built the partnerships, and are off and running just since earlier this year. Together, we have housed 140 homeless Veterans since January 2015. There is more to be done to finish the job, and we've set a goal to help 96 more Veterans over the next 100 days. Like the entire Challenge, this is an ambitious target, but the goal is a critical one, and worthy of pushing our expectations of what we can achieve."

DSHA Director Anas Ben Addi stated, "Delaware is one of only eight states who have risen to this Challenge. Like other communities, we intend to change the misperception that veteran homelessness is a problem that cannot be solved. To reach our goal, we need to be sure we have reached every homeless Veteran, and we need landlords willing to be a part of the team helping homeless Veterans. Supportive services and rental assistance from community providers help Veterans get back on their feet, but difficulty locating and being approved for rental housing is often a primary barrier."

Landlords! Help us help our Vets! (video PSA below)

[Governor Jack Markell](#)

[Senator Tom Carper](#)

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